

News item:

World religions: May 2017 onwards

Amendments to paper 1 and paper 2 overall mark structure and markbands

Diploma Programme coordinators and teachers are informed that there have been very important changes to the mark structure and assessment markbands of the world religions paper one and paper two components. Please follow the link for more details.

World religions: May 2017 onwards

Amendments to paper 1 and paper 2 overall mark structure and markbands

In response to the concerns of teachers over whether the current assessment structure allows candidates to meet the higher levels of achievement and concerns about the reliability of marking, changes are being introduced to the mark structure and markband descriptors for paper 1 and paper

As a result of collaboration with senior examiners and other subject experts, the following changes will be implemented with effect from the May 2017 examination session.

1. **Paper one: part (b)** will now be assessed out of a total of 6 marks instead of 7 marks. This makes the distribution of marks even across each band. Therefore, the total mark for the component is now 45 marks and no longer 50 marks.
2. **Paper one: part (b)** 'Explain' will be the only command term used in the questions. This will allow candidates to achieve the higher marks.
3. **Paper two:** descriptors in the markbands are now condensed to five levels (A-E) instead of six (A-F). Markband descriptors were revised with more clear descriptors that include specific indicators. The five levels are now equally distributed into a total of 15 marks per essay question. Therefore, the total mark for the component is now 30 marks and no longer 40 marks.
4. **Internal assessment:** The internal assessment component has not undergone any changes.

The weightings for each component will remain the same (30% for paper one, 45% for paper two, and 25% for the internal assessment task).

These changes are *only* for clarification and simplification purposes, they *do not* constitute a change of the curriculum, and they *should not* affect how teachers deliver the course.

Teachers and coordinators are asked to contact IB Answers with any queries or concerns.

Revised Paper 1 part (b) markbands

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	The response displays little understanding of the demands of the question. The response is descriptive in nature and where examples are referred to, they are factually incorrect, irrelevant or vague. Terminology used is incorrect or inaccurate.
3-4	The response displays an understanding of the demands of the question, but these are only partially addressed. There is some explanation, but this is not fully developed. Examples used are generally appropriate and relevant but do not always support the explanation. The use of relevant terminology is mostly accurate, with some inconsistencies.
5-6	The demands of the question are met. The response contains a well-developed explanation, which is effectively supported by appropriate and relevant examples. The use of relevant terminology is accurate throughout the response.

Revised Paper 2 markbands

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	The response demonstrates minimal knowledge and understanding in relation to the demands of the question. There is little use of relevant terminology. The response is descriptive in nature. Any conclusions presented are superficial, anecdotal or common-sense.
4–6	The response demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding of the beliefs/ concepts/ practices/teachings of the specified religion in relation to the demands of the question. There is some use of relevant terminology. The argument is limited and the analysis is only partially consistent with the knowledge and understanding demonstrated. There is some use of examples, but these are generally vague and do not support the argument. There is a limited conclusion(s), but this is not supported by the evidence presented or examples.
7–9	The response demonstrates mostly relevant and appropriate knowledge and understanding of the beliefs/concepts/practices/teachings of the

	specified religion in relation to the demands of the question. There is use of relevant terminology, but this is not always consistent. There is an argument, which is generally supported by the analysis; connections between beliefs/concepts/practices/teachings are identified but not developed. The argument at times lacks clarity and coherence but this does not hinder understanding. There is a conclusion(s) but this is only partially supported by the evidence presented and the examples used.
10–12	The response demonstrates relevant and appropriate knowledge and understanding of the beliefs/concepts/practices/teachings of the specified religion, and this is demonstrated throughout the essay. There is consistent use of relevant terminology. The argument is structured and coherent and supported by the analysis; connections between beliefs/concepts/practices/teachings are identified and developed. There is a conclusion(s) supported by the evidence presented, with relevant examples. There is a partially developed evaluation.
13–15	The response demonstrates detailed, relevant and appropriate knowledge and understanding of the beliefs/concepts/practices/teachings of the specified religion, and this is demonstrated throughout the essay. There is consistent use of relevant terminology. A reasoned argument(s) is well-structured and coherent and supported by the analysis with connections between beliefs/concepts/practices/teachings clearly identified and effectively developed. There is a conclusion(s) supported by the evidence presented, and effective use of examples. There is a developed evaluation; any minor inconsistencies do not detract from the strength of the overall argument.